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The Online Organization

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Abstract

In current times, competitiveness between organizations has forced them to make improvements in resource management, adapting to emerging technologies and filling job positions with the most capable individuals. Despite the need to evolve and overcome difficulties in resource management, the Portuguese Air Force has not upgraded its method, centered on hierarchical structure and career progress, compromising effectiveness and competitiveness amongst other organizations. A central issue is that competencies within job positions are not yet typified, meaning that the individual that occupies a certain job position may not be the most suitable for that position. To solve this problem, this ongoing research describes a model of an Informational Architecture for the Portuguese Air Force, which represents the concepts of Organizational Entities, Job Positions, Resource Management and Human Resource Management through Competency Management. The model describes each concept individually and the existing relationships with other concepts. When implemented and validated, the model will allow an improvement in human resource management effectiveness, and efficiency in resource allocation for Job Positions.

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Keywords: Organization; Resource Management; Human Resource Management; Competency; Competency Management; Informational Architecture; Organizational Entities; Job Positions.

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1. Introduction

The challenges that an organization faces at each moment in history, determine its survival, according to its capacity to respond, adapt and change before those same challenges¹.

In the current organizational context, technological, political, economic, social and cultural changes are an unavoidable reality². In the same way, the increase in competitiveness between organizations contributes for the need of organizational change, guaranteeing the organizations' survival over time.

Competitiveness in an organization is influenced by most various factors, being human resources the most important³. In the same line of thought, human resource management is one of the most important activities in an organization, in order to succeed⁴.

According to Ribeiro, the concept of competency for the Portuguese Air Force (PRT AF) consists of capacities, values behaviors, abilities and qualifications of an individual, that are inherent or attained through training, professional or personal experiences, and that is useful for the PRT AF⁵. This concept allows the understanding of how important competencies can be, when it comes to selecting the most capable individual to occupy a certain position⁶. Given the previous premises, it is mandatory that the PRT AF begins its transition to becoming an organization that manages people by competencies in order to increase effectiveness and improve performance to accomplish its goals and objectives, as a modern, unwearied and changing organization.

All facts considered, a problem arises, leading to this investigation: A model that represents individuals and their competencies, Job Positions and necessary resources, and manages the organization in a unifying, automatic and efficient information system does not exist in the PRT AF.

The problem can be divided in the following topics:

- A methodology for the definition of the attributes of individuals within the organization does not exist;
- A profile has not been developed for Job Positions, defining requirements regarding competencies and other attributes of an individual;

The following question arises, associated with the problem:

- What is the relevance of a dematerialized model, intended for human resource management in the PRT AF?

A dematerialized model for human resource management translates in the creation of an information system the authors named as Online Organization. This concept allows the full integration and representation of the organization's Job Positions and individuals, as well as their attributes, competencies and requirements. This way, it is possible to select and allocate an individual, online, while instantiating the required resources for a specific Job Position. The Online Organization makes feasible an optimization of human resource management, through an information system, can connect the organization, making it more self-aware and therefore more productive.

2. Concepts and Applications

In this chapter the authors include the relevant literature used for the model development. The concepts exposed are a contextualization of the research subject, addressing important concepts related to the theme in order to better understand the proposed model.

2.1. Information Architecture

Information Architecture (IA) is one of the levels of Enterprise Architecture (EA). To understand the concept of IA, one must first understand the concept of information, and how it differs from the concept of data. Data is defined as facts in its raw, unaltered, disorganized state, with no value for the organization unless it is processed and reorganized⁷. Information on the other hand, consists of data that has been processed to withdraw value and become meaningful to the organization⁷.

Different authors define IA in different ways. To Hoogervorst, IA is "*a coherent and consistent set of principles and standards that guide how information must be used and handled*"⁸. A simple, yet successful definition, that illustrates how IA is used to manage an organizations' information. However, there is more to IA than a simple set of principles. Rosenfeld et al, have broken down IA to four premises⁹:

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